



Agriculture News Yellowstone County Extension

June 2010

<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.us/extension/ag/>

TO: Farm & Ranch Businesses
FROM: Steve Lackman
Yellowstone County Agricultural Agent

A Message from Steve

As our world of technology changes at a very rapid rate, we are asking for your help. In order to save postage we are asking people on our mailing list to receive our newsletter via email. If you are able to receive the newsletter electronically, send me an email to stevlackman@montana.edu from your email address you want us to use. We want to be certain you are kept up to date on new agriculture information. Please notify us if your email address changes. If you do not have email capabilities, we will continue to send your newsletter in the mail. Thanks for your help.

In this issue I have included extensive information about grasshoppers from a MSU Ag Alert as well as a flyer about the Annie's Project Quickbooks Computer Lab offered for today's farm and ranch women and their spouses.

GRASSHOPPERS IN RANGELAND AND CROPLAND

The area of Montana infested with 15 or more grasshoppers per square yard has increased from one million acres in 2006 to 17 million acres in 2009. USDA – ARS 2010 Hazard Maps show the densities of grasshoppers that were counted across Montana last summer. Grasshopper populations tend to increase during periods of drought and region-wide outbreaks and typically last from 2 to 4 years. Grasshopper populations are expected to be higher across Montana this summer. The migratory, two-striped and clear-winged grasshoppers are common species in the current outbreak. Grasshopper scouting typically begins during the last week of May or the first week of June depending on weather conditions. Sweeping with a net close to ground level can be used to detect small first instars that are hard to see. When the nymphs are more visible, the square foot method can be used: visually count the number of grasshoppers in a one square foot area. Randomly repeat 18 times while walking an area and divide the total by 2 to give the number per square yard.

Rangeland: A total of 15-20 grasshopper nymphs per square yard is considered an economic threshold for treatment. At these densities grasshoppers can result in 200 – 500 pounds of lost forage per acre of rangeland, depending on their duration and conditions such as precipitation. Reduced Agent and Area Treatment strategies (RAATs) can be used to control grasshoppers in rangeland. USDA research has demonstrated that RAATs, a "skip pass" approach that also uses lower rates of insecticide, can achieve 80 to 95% control (compared to 85-99% control with complete blanket coverage at the full insecticide rate) at a lower cost. The insecticide dimilin is commonly used in large-scale grasshopper spray operations. Dimilin is an insect growth regulator that is only effective against juvenile insects that are molting. It is NOT effective against adult insects that no longer molt, so timing is critical. Ideally the majority of grasshoppers should be in the 3rd instar stage during treatment. Commercial honey bee colonies are often placed on ranchland. A benefit of dimilin's mode of action is that it is relatively safe to adult honeybees.

Internet Information:

High Plains IPM Guide: <http://wiki.bugwood.org/uploads/Grasshoppers-RangePasture.pdf>

USDA-ARS Aerial RAATs brochure: <http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/grasshopper/Research/aerial.pdf>

GRASSHOPPERS (cont'd)

Spring Wheat: Grasshoppers are notorious for their ability to move into cropland from surrounding grassy areas; cropland surrounded by grass is particularly at risk. A total of 8-14 grasshoppers per square yard within the field, or 20-40 per square yard along the field margin, are considered to be economic thresholds for spring wheat. The stage and condition of the crop can affect the economic thresholds.

Crop protection is typically achieved by applying a boarder treatment of insecticide to keep the grasshoppers from entering the crop. A border width of 150 feet surrounding the crop may be adequate for control, but if grasshopper densities are high, control may require up to a 1/4 mile border treatment where ground applied RAATs can be considered. Under extreme pressure, control may be difficult and multiple border treatments may be required. Border areas and crop margins should be monitored after treatment to ensure that grasshoppers do not re-enter the field. Insecticide baits can also be effectively used but USDA research has found that the effectiveness of insecticidal baits can depend on grasshopper densities. Baits are not recommended when grasshoppers densities are higher than 30-40 per square yard. Internet Information:

USDA-ARS Ground RAATs brochure: <http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/grasshopper/Research/atv.pdf>

Alfalfa: Economic thresholds for alfalfa are higher: juvenile nymphs, 50-75 per square yard on the field margin and 30-45 per square yard within the field; adult grasshoppers 21-40 per square yard on the field margin and 8-14 per square yard within the field. The stage and condition of the crop can affect the economic thresholds, first year seedling stands may be more susceptible.

Internet Information:

High Plains IPM Guide: http://wiki.bugwood.org/HPIPM:Grasshoppers_and_Crickets

Additional information can be found on the USDA – ARS Sidney grasshopper website, <http://www.sidney.ars.usda.gov/grasshopper/>. The High Plains IPM Guide website, <http://www.highplainsipm.org/>, provides detailed information on sampling, thresholds and management. For more information please contact Kevin Wanner, Assistant Professor of Entomology & Cropland Extension Entomologist, Montana State University, by email at kwanner@montana.edu.

NOXIOUS WEED SEED FORAGE CERTIFICATION

Procedures for the Noxious Weed Seed Free (NWSFF) Certification will be the same this year as they were last year. 2010 inspection fees will be based on a per acre fee of \$2.50. For example, a producer requesting a 15-acre inspection will be charged \$37.50. Please contact Steve Lackman at the Extension Office (256-2828) one week prior to your planned cutting date. This will ensure that schedules can be arranged and will also allow you to cut earlier if your plans change. **All forage must be inspected prior to cutting in order to qualify the NWSFF certification.** If you have questions regarding the certification process, please call Steve at 256-2828.

For Fact Sheets and General Ag Information Specific to
Yellowstone County,

Please refer to our web page at:

<http://www.co.yellowstone.mt.gov/extension/ag/>

The Montana State University Extension Service is an ADA/EO/AA/Veteran's Preference Employer and Provider of Educational Outreach.

Montana State University Extension encourages persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you anticipate needing any type of special accommodations or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the Extension Office at 406-256-2828 in advance of your participation.

Annie's Project

Quickbooks Computer Lab

Saturday, June 26, 2010
9 a.m. – 4 p.m.
MSU Billings
Downtown Conference Center
112 North Broadway



presented by
Galusha, Higgins & Galusha,
CPA's
and
Montana MarketManager

Cost: The fee for the Billings Quickbooks lab is \$10. Lunch is included.
Registration: Pre-registration is required and registrations are due by June 1, 2010.
Enrollment is limited due to room size and available computers. Registration will be accepted on a first come basis.

Special Thanks to:
Bernie Mason and Steve Lackman, MSU Extension Service MSU-Billings

Business Management Education for
Today's Farm and Ranch Women

The mission of Annie's Project is
to empower farm and ranch
women to be better business
partners through networks and
by managing and organizing
critical information.



Montana MarketManager is a joint program of
the Montana Grain Growers Association and the
Montana Stock Growers Association. We are
committed to bringing quality business and
marketing education and information to
Montana grain and livestock producers.

For more information on Annie's Project
please contact:

Montana Grain Growers Association
406-761-4596

E-mail: lmorgan@mgga.org

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Extension Service (CSREES) under Award



2010 Annie's Project Computer Lab Registration

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (day) _____ Phone (eve) _____

E-mail _____

Registration Fee = \$10.00

Method of Payment:

☐ Check

☐ Bill Me

☐ Credit Card

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Please make checks payable to:
Montana Grain Growers Association

Mail to:
MGGA
P.O. Box 1165
Great Falls, MT 59403